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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/719,934	11/21/2003	Hiroshi Abe	42530-6200	4003

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EXAMINER

BEAUCHAINE, MARK J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3653

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/22/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/719,934

Applicant(s)

ABE ET AL.

Examiner

Mark J. Beauchaine

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 December 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 6, 8-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patent Number US 6,656,034 B2 by Rasmussen et al ("Rasmussen") in view of Patent Number 3,662,770 by Cohen ("Cohen"). The guiding device 10 for dispensing discs from storage hopper 12 disclosed by Rasmussen comprises disc guiding unit 14 attached to the storage hopper via pivotable connection 20 and fixing unit/fastener 22 to extend operatively for conveying discs in a first mode of operation (see Figures 1 and 2) and attached to the storage hopper to extend in a second non-operatively mode of operation at a different alignment with the storage hopper (see Figure 3), and switching means 26 for detecting when the disc guiding unit is in the second non-operatively mode (see Figures 4-6 and column 3, lines 29-48).

Said fixing unit/fastener includes spring based hook member 22 (see Figure 5) for engaging pin member 24b in the disc guiding unit. Said fixing unit includes spring based pin 22a for engagement with locking hole 22b (see Figure 5). The fixing unit automatically locks the disc guiding unit when engaged in the first mode of operation.

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The fixing unit includes spring based fastener member 22 (see Figure 5) that can releasably hold the disc guiding unit in the first mode of operation.

Rasmussen further discloses a handle to enable the guiding device to be carried (see square handle on left side of apparatus housing in Figures 2 and 3), and disc holding unit 24 (see Figure 7) for contacting and securing discs within the disc guiding unit when the disc guiding unit is moved from the first mode of operation to the second mode of operation (see column 2, line 61 through column 3, line 18).

Rasmussen fails to disclose said switching means being connected to an electric motor. Cohen teaches a dispensing apparatus for coin-like tokens (see column 2, lines 35-46) comprising switching means 41 that is actuated via movement of a mechanical element 12 of said device (see Figure 3 and column 5, lines 6-27) and is connected in series to electrical motor 27 for the purpose of switching said apparatus from a first operative mode to a non-operative mode such that the switching means is OFF and the electrical motor cannot operate for the purpose of regulating the discharge of tokens from the apparatus. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the switching means of Cohen into the apparatus of Rasmussen for the purpose of regulating the discharge of coins from the apparatus.

Claims 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rasmussen in view of Cohen as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Patent Number 2,853,083 by Roedelheimer et al ("Roedelheimer"). Rasmussen/Cohen fails to

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disclose a buffering unit. Roedelheimer teaches a disc guiding device comprising pivotally-mounted disc guiding unit 9 and buffering unit 19/22/25, including spring member 25, (see Figure 3) to provide increasing resistance to movement of said disc guiding unit from a first mode of operation to a second mode of operation (see column 2, lines 69-72) for the purpose of controlling the pivotal movement of said disc guiding unit. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the buffering unit of Roedelheimer into the apparatus of Rasmussen/Cohen for the purpose of controlling the pivotal movement of said disc guiding unit.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rasmussen/Cohen as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Patent Number 3,730,575 by Arlauskas et al ("Arlauskas"). Rasmussen/Cohen fails to disclose a spring based hook member. The use of a spring based hook member is a generic means of connecting two machine elements that is well known to one of ordinary skill in virtually any art that requires a releasable connection between two separate machine elements. Arlauskas teaches spring based hook member 50 for engaging pin member 46 for the purpose of releasably connecting two separate machine elements. The pervasive use of such a releasable connector configuration is further evidenced by the hook 160/pin 190 configuration of Patent Number US 6,471,260 B1 by Weinerman et al ("Weinerman") (see Figure 2), the hook 3/pin 12 configuration of Patent Number 4,978,153 by Hirsch et al ("Hirsch") (see Figure 1), and the hook 18/pin 16 configuration

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of Patent Number 5,897,148 by Arabia Jr. et al ("Arabia") (see Figure 1). The disclosures of Weinerman, Hirsch and Arabia indicate that the Applicant's hook/pin configuration is notoriously and unquestionably well known in any art connecting two separate machine elements for the purpose of releasably connecting two separate apparatus components. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the spring based hook member of Arlauskas into the disc guide unit of Rasmussen/Cohen for the purpose of releasably connecting two separate apparatus components.

Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rasmussen/Cohen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Patent Number 4,943,258 by Abe ("Abe"). Rasmussen/Cohen fails to disclose a disc holding unit having a housing member. Abe teaches a coin dispensing apparatus comprising disc holding member 17 including housing member 21 affixed to disc guiding member 6 and a movable stopper member/ball 20 that is subject to gravity movement and is contained within said housing member (see Figures 4 and 5).

Claims 15-18 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rasmussen in view of Patent Number US 6,261,170 B1 by Bell et al ("Bell") in view of Cohen. The coin dispensing apparatus disclosed by Rasmussen comprises bulk coin storage hopper 10 and coin elevator unit 14 for transporting coins to a dispensing position 30 (see Figure 2). Said coin elevator unit is removably attached from the

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apparatus via connector 20. Said coin elevator unit is movably/pivotally attached to the storage hopper to provide a first mode of operation for dispensing coins (see Figures 1 and 2), and a second mode of operation wherein any coins in the coin elevator unit are held stationary, via disc holding unit 24 (see Figures 7 and 8), and the coin elevator unit is positioned at a different alignment from the first mode of operation relative to the storage hopper (see Figure 3). The position of said elevator unit in the second mode of operation is 90 degrees from its position of the first mode of operation.

Rasmussen further discloses switching means 26 for detecting when said coin elevator unit is in the second mode of operation (see Figures 5 and 6), fixing unit 22 for automatically locking the coin elevator unit in the first mode of operation (see Figures 4 and 5), and disc holding unit 24 for contacting and securing the coins within the coin elevator unit when in the second mode of operation (see Figures 7 and 8 and column 2, line 61 through column 3, line 18).

Rasmussen fails to clearly disclose a selector unit. Bell teaches a coin dispensing apparatus comprising selector unit for removing individual coins from coin storage hopper 10 for the purpose of dispensing individual coins in series from the apparatus. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the selector unit of Bell into the apparatus of Rasmussen for the purpose of dispensing individual coins in series from the apparatus.

Rasmussen fails to disclose said switching means being connected to an electric motor. Cohen teaches a dispensing apparatus for coin-like tokens (see column 2, lines 35-46) comprising switching means 41 that is actuated via movement of a mechanical

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element 12 of said device (see Figure 3 and column 5, lines 6-27) and is connected in series to electrical motor 27 for the purpose of switching said apparatus from a first operative mode to a non-operative mode such that the switching means is OFF and the electrical motor cannot operate for the purpose of regulating the discharge of tokens from the apparatus. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the switching means of Cohen into the apparatus of Rasmussen for the purpose of regulating the discharge of coins from the apparatus.

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rasmussen in view of Bell in view of Cohen as applied to claim 15 above, and further in view of Roedelheimer. Rasmussen/Bell/Cohen fails to disclose a movement-controlling spring member. Roedelheimer teaches a coin dispensing apparatus comprising spring member 25 operatively attached to pivotally-mounted coin elevator unit 9 to control movement of said unit as it moves from a first mode of operation to a second mode of operation (see Figures 2 and 3) for the purpose of controlling the pivoting movement of said coin elevator unit. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the spring member of Roedelheimer into the apparatus of Rasmussen/Bell/Cohen for the purpose of controlling the pivoting movement of said coin elevator unit.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

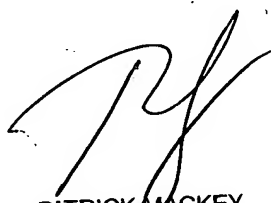
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark J. Beauchaine whose telephone number is (571)272-6934. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM through 5:00PM Mondays through Thursdays.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick H. Mackey can be reached on (571)272-6916. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

mjb



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